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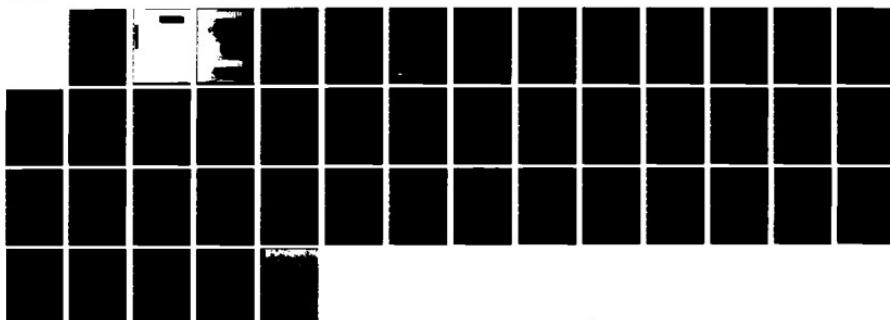
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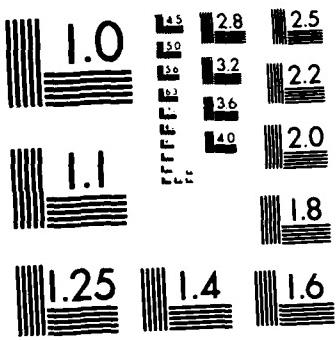
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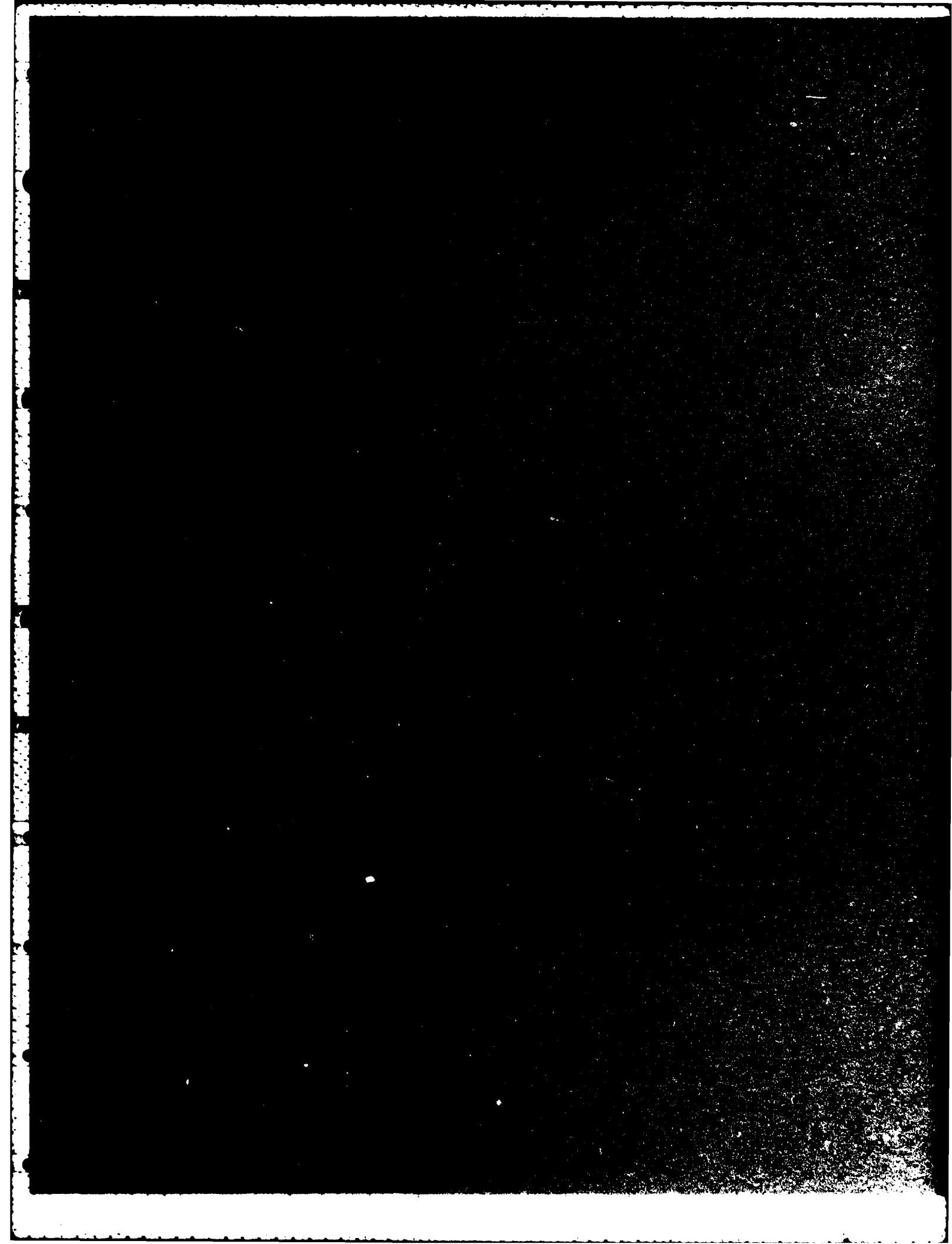
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The aim of the conference reported on in the Note was to consider the role of the Polish military after the proclamation of martial law on December 15, 1981; the military and political background to the events of 1981; and the implications for the future of the Polish armed forces, both in the Polish Communist system and in the Warsaw Pact. This Note summarizes key themes that emerged from the discussion. It also presents a condensed record of the discussion and summarizes the views of individual participants.

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# A RAND NOTE

THE POLISH MILITARY AFTER MARTIAL LAW:  
REPORT OF A RAND CONFERENCE, OCTOBER 14, 1982

A. Ross Johnson, Barbara Kliszewski

June 1983

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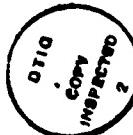
## PREFACE

On October 14, 1982, The Rand Corporation held a workshop conference in Washington, D.C., on "The Polish Military." The workshop was convened as part of the research on Poland and the Warsaw Pact being conducted for a Project AIR FORCE study, "Soviet Vulnerabilities in Eastern Europe." The aim of the meeting was to consider the role of the Polish military after the proclamation of martial law on December 13, 1981; the military and political background to the events of 1981; and the implications for the future of the Polish armed forces, both in the Polish Communist system and in the Warsaw Pact. → P. ✓

Rand invited a small group of specialists on Poland and the Warsaw Pact to discuss these issues; the participants are listed in Appendix A.

A. Ross Johnson, who served as moderator of the conference, summarized key themes that emerged from the discussion. Barbara Kliszewski served as rapporteur. Together, they prepared the condensed record of the discussion and summarized the views of individual participants.

The authors are indebted to several of the participants for comments on an earlier draft of this Note.



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KEY RESEARCH THESES

The workshop discussion provided information and views on the past, present, and possible future roles of the Polish military, both domestically in Poland and in the Warsaw Pact. The body of this Note contains a summary of the discussion, including differences of view. Six major theses emerged from the discussion. These theses may serve to enrich current appraisals of developments in Poland and the Warsaw Pact and to guide subsequent research.

**The Polish military is likely to dominate the Polish Communist system for some time.** The Polish army did not challenge the Party; the military stressed professionalism and detachment from political intrigue within the Party in the 1970s. But after 1980, the military gradually filled the power vacuum created by the disintegration of the Party.

The exercise of supreme political power is a strain on the military leadership. Many newly appointed military commissars are staff and administrative officers from the "middle-heavy" part of the officer corps whose assignment to non-military tasks need not detract from military combat capability. Yet, combat capabilities have declined significantly. Continued involvement of the military in politics is likely to dilute military professionalism. The Soviets are unhappy with the fact and the precedent of the ascendancy of the military over the Party apparatus. Nonetheless, in the absence of any evidence of regular Party organizations being rebuilt, the military will probably continue to run Poland (as it continued to do after the "suspension" of martial law in December 1982). Both a sense of duty and the reluctance

to give up power make the military reluctant to withdraw from politics. The predominance of the military in the People's Republic of China in the early 1970s is the only precedent for military rule in a Communist country and may suggest some "lessons" for Poland.

**Jaruzelski and the military have failed to define a political program.** Jaruzelski is among the ablest Polish generals, and as the Party disintegrated, he may well have seen military rule as the only alternative to Soviet invasion. The military entered the political arena with "clean hands," in the view of most Poles. Remarkably, much of the popular hostility seems still to be directed at the Party and the system rather than at the military or Jaruzelski personally. But Jaruzelski and his military commissars have tried to solve the domestic crisis through command discipline and maintenance of order. They have resisted overtures from lay Catholic circles for a resumption of dialogue with Polish society. Within the context of the Communist system, the military could in principle initiate reforms--part of the Czechoslovak officer corps was at the cutting edge of political reform in Czechoslovakia in 1967-1968. Yet the polarization between society and regime in Poland, along with economic deterioration, makes it unlikely that the Polish army will play this role.

**The Polish army's political role reduces its combat capability.** Most of the military commissars in the economy and administration are not officers from operational units. But training programs have been curtailed, and senior officers must perform a new political job in addition to their regular military assignment. Conscripts are a cross-section of society and as such share the attitudes of society as a whole. Appraisal of the effect of the new political role on the combat

capability and institutional viability of the Polish military could benefit from a comparative examination of similar experiences in developing countries and in other non-Communist countries.

**The military leadership utilized ZOMO (the elite civilian security force) rather than regular military units to confront workers and demonstrators.** Western appraisals of Poland prior to the imposition of martial law failed to appreciate fully the strengthening of ZOMO. By using this organization, manned by a combination of political loyalists, "disenfranchised" youth, and ex-criminals, the military high command was able to avoid a repetition of the 1970 Gdansk riots, when military regulars confronted demonstrators. The composition, mission, and capabilities of ZOMO deserve more attention. Some military units were also utilized during the imposition of martial law, but they were less visible than ZOMO. The question of how and to what extent military security (WSW) and internal defense (WOW) units were employed needs more attention.

**The Polish military would be divided in the event of Soviet invasion.** Should ZOMO prove unable to suppress violent resistance in the future, it is unlikely that the regular army would suffice for this task, and Soviet invasion would be the likely consequence. The Polish high command has "burned its bridges" and would accept or invite Soviet invasion if this were the only way to preserve the Communist system and Polish statehood. Lower-level officers would be inclined to lead resistance. Circumstances would determine whether and to what degree much of the army would remain passive.

**The Polish crisis has seriously complicated Soviet planning for a war in Europe.** Poland, with the third largest army in Europe, played a

key role in Soviet planning for a Warsaw Pact-NATO conflict in the 1960s and 1970s. This planning included some variant of a Polish Front (either Soviet-Polish or Polish) and the allocation of all 15 Polish divisions and associated support units to the "external front" in the West. Today, the combat capability of the Polish army--never equal to that of the Soviet army on a unit basis, if only because of inferior equipment--has declined. Training programs have been curtailed; equipment has not been modernized; senior officers have political as well as military responsibilities; conscripts and some junior officers have been deeply affected by the Solidarity movement. Both Jaruzelski and the Soviets would fear to dispatch the entire Polish operational army outside Poland today; part of it is now needed for internal security. Hence an exclusively Polish Front can no longer be organized. East Germany is unable to take over responsibility for attack on the Northern axis; only Soviet forces can do this. Further increase in Soviet forces stationed in the GDR would involve major political as well as economic costs. Forces can be mobilized in Soviet military districts and moved West, but this would greatly increase warning time. This could lead the Soviets to turn to greater reliance on weapons of mass destruction.

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## GLOSSARY

Lidova Milice	People's Militia (Czechoslovakia)
MPA	Main Political Administration
MVD	Ministerstvo Vnutennikh Del (Ministry of Internal Affairs, USSR)
NKVD	Narodnyi Komissariat Vnutennikh Del (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (1917-1946), USSR)
NSWP	Non-Soviet Warsaw Pact
ORMO	Ochotnicza Rezerwa Milicji Obywatelskiej
OTK	Obrona Terytorium Kraju (Defense of National Territory, Poland)
<i>Polityka</i>	Warsaw Weekly, Poland
<i>Wojsko Ludowe</i>	Armed Forces Monthly, Poland
WOW	Wojska Obrony Wewnetrznej (Internal Security Forces, Poland)
WRON	Wojskowa Rada Ocalenia Narodowego (Military Council of National Salvation, Poland)
WSW	Wojska Sluzby Wewnetrznej (Military Security Forces, Poland)
<i>Zolnierz Wolnosci</i>	Armed Forces Daily, Poland
ZOMO	Zmotoryzowane Odwody Milicji Obywatelskiej (Motorized Reserve of Citizens Militia, Poland)

## FIGURES

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## SUMMARY OF CONFERENCE DISCUSSIONS

The views of individual participants, as summarized and paraphrased by the rapporteur and moderator, are presented below as "bulleted" paragraphs. The discussion has been reordered according to the following topics: the background to martial law; the role of the Polish military under martial law; the role of Jaruzelski; and the implications for the domestic political role of the Polish military, its combat effectiveness, and the future of Warsaw Pact coalition warfare.

### BACKGROUND TO MARTIAL LAW

- We should keep in mind four points on the nature of the Polish military institution: (1) The Polish military evolved radically between the 1950s and the 1980s. In the 1950s, it was a direct Soviet instrument headed and run by Soviet-Poles at all levels. It later became a Polish Communist institution, simultaneously a part of two systems: the Soviet-dominated Warsaw Pact and the Polish Communist political system, distinct from though clearly dependent on Moscow. (2) The Polish military became an increasingly professional, modern, capable military organization with a homogeneous leadership and officer corps. (3) The Polish military, in terms of its role within and relationship to the Party, became increasingly distinct as an institution. Line military officers became masters of their own house more than other Communist military establishments. After 1956, the security and counterintelligence service, WSW, functioned as a military institution, not as part of the civilian internal security apparatus. In the 1970s, the Main Political Administration (MPA) probably carried less weight in the Polish military than in other Communist militaries. There was an effort in the 1970s to distance the Polish army from Polish Communist politics. In 1970, the military was used to suppress demonstrations on the Baltic coast, the consequence of which was that the military turned inward in the 1970s. The military distanced itself from Polish Communist politics and devoted itself to its military missions, particularly its external military mission in the Warsaw Pact. Because the military achieved some autonomy and institutional integrity distinct from the Party, it was in a position to assume a domestic political role as the structures that were supposed to exercise power collapsed. Yet, in December 1981, Jaruzelski, who sought to promote detachment, professionalism, and

institutional integrity for the military, assumed supreme political leadership, for which he was quite unprepared. (4) In a situation where the prime emphasis within the upper echelons of the military is on non-military-related functions, such as providing guidance in place of the Party and carrying out inspections, does not the mix of incentives within the officer corps undergo change? Over time, does it not mean a return to a more important role for the *politruks*, the kind of people Jaruzelski tried to push aside? In terms of the professional Polish military that took shape in the 1970s, is this not a formula for self-destruction if it goes on for very long?

- A word on the role of the Polish armed forces in the Warsaw Pact: By the late 1960s, the East European military establishments emerged as capable militaries with modern weapons. Poland had the largest and perhaps the most capable army in the Pact outside of the Soviet Union. Warsaw Pact doctrine on armed conflict in Central Europe underwent change in the 1960s, which was reflected in Polish doctrine and the kind of role envisaged for the Polish armed forces. Polish doctrine assumed that any war in Europe would be a nuclear war; that for Poland it would inevitably be a coalition war; that war should not be fought primarily on Polish territory, but should be waged on an "external front," with offensive involvement of all 15 Polish divisions as part of a Warsaw Pact contingent. Polish generals apparently envisaged a Polish contribution that would comprise an independent Polish Front under Polish command. The Soviets at least tacitly subscribed to that, although other variants of coalition warfare were exercised, in which Polish units would be integrated under Soviet command. Polish participation would be crucial to the success of a Soviet surprise offensive.
- The point on the weight of the Polish military in the Warsaw Pact balance is important. The Polish army is not only the second largest army in the Warsaw Pact but the third largest in Europe. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Polish army trained such that in case of war, it would establish a Polish Front, consisting mainly of Polish Armies. This was the main variant. Other variants involved the use of some Polish Armies in a Soviet Front. The Polish military elite's view of a Polish Front differs from that of the Soviets. The Polish military elite favors a Polish Front because it would satisfy the command aspirations of high-ranking Polish officers and because it would be easy to reinforce a Polish Front from Polish territory. The main obstacle, in the Soviets' view, is the problem of the concentration of Polish forces. The establishment of a Polish Front could lead to a collision between Polish divisions

marching on a south/north axis and Soviet divisions marching on an east/west axis during mobilization. The second obstacle is the Soviets' lack of trust in the loyalty of such large Polish units as a Front. The solution may be a compromise between Soviet and Polish views, i.e., a Polish Front of two, not three, Polish Armies and one Soviet Army with a number of Soviet support units. This would give the Soviets the opportunity to include their generals in all command posts of such a Front.

- Prior to the events of 1980/1981, did the Polish military feel they had the infrastructure, the logistical support for this Front, or did they rely partially upon Soviet support?
- A Polish Army has much of the same equipment as a Soviet Army. Generally speaking, in case of war, the Soviet Front should supply each Polish division and each Polish Army. But this is not easy to do, because of the limited capacity of the logistic organs at the Army level. It would be very difficult for a Soviet Army set up to supply four or five Soviet divisions to also supply an additional three or four Polish divisions at short notice. And the main problem is not logistic support but interoperability and coordination. The engineering troops, artillery troops, etc., not included in the 15 Polish divisions far outnumber those that make up the divisions. Should these troops be subordinated to the Soviet Armies and support Soviet divisions? This has not been resolved despite 20 years of joint Polish-Soviet exercises and maneuvers.
- When the 50 Warsaw Pact divisions postulated for an in-place attack against NATO are discussed in the West, it is sometimes assumed that they are all of equal combat capability.
- Although the organizational structure is the same in Polish, Czech, Soviet, East German, and other East European divisions, the quality of the divisions varies greatly. If we assume that the quality coefficient of the best Soviet division is 1.0, the best Polish division is about 0.7; the GDR, 0.8; Romania, 0.5; and so on. Concern about this disparity was expressed by Marshal Grechko long ago, during a 1963 Warsaw Pact exercise. His viewpoint was not shared by the Kremlin, which had no intention of giving the same equipment to East European divisions as to Soviet divisions.
- How do we appraise the relative human capabilities--the political and military reliability--of today's East European armed forces and those of the late 1970s, before Solidarity?

- The Polish officer corps is as well trained as the Soviet officer corps, if not better trained. In terms of command qualifications, capabilities, and training, the Soviets and Poles are equal. The problem is one of equipment. The Polish army usually has second-generation equipment that the Soviets had 10 or 15 years earlier.
- What about the relative quality of the Polish and other East European company-grade officers and conscripts?
- Today, the East German army is the best trained East European army. The Polish army has met only about 50 percent of its planned training program over the last two years. The Czech army is on about the same level as the Polish, and both are much better trained than the Hungarian, Romanian, and Bulgarian armies.
- The Polish army is large, but not really modern. It is at least one, if not two, generations behind in tanks and in artillery pieces. The distribution of equipment throughout the force is also very uneven. Thus, the concept of the Polish Front requires discussion. The Polish Front has been a reality, at least in the minds of Polish officers, since the mid-1960s. Do we appreciate the magnitude of the dilemma the Soviets face if the Polish Front cannot be organized? Questions of equipment aside, Soviet divisions in the interior are manned to a lower standard and would require greater mobilization than the Polish divisions in western Poland, and consequently the Soviet divisions would need a greater degree of training to become combat-effective. The Soviets would need to bring those divisions up and in consequence give NATO greater warning time before initiating a war, thereby losing most of the advantages of a so-called surprise attack. Other options would be not to operate heavily in the North German Plain and cede that responsibility to East German units to fill in until a Soviet Front arrived. It is not clear that the Soviets have settled on a solution to this dilemma. It is doubtful that the concept of a Polish Front has been abandoned as a result of the events of 1980-1982.

#### THE POLISH MILITARY UNDER MARTIAL LAW

- Our purpose is to discuss the Polish military under martial law in terms of the domestic role of the Polish army; in terms of the Warsaw Pact ramifications; the impact on the military institution itself; and the role and personality of Jaruzelski. Jaruzelski said in 1981 that "in this part of Europe, one cannot be a bystander." The Polish army has indeed not been a bystander.

- Six points may be made on the role of the Polish military: (1) The Polish military has not really been tested to date. It has been used primarily in a supportive role, as a troubleshooter. Senior officers are active in enterprises and local administration, junior officers in traffic control (primarily WSW forces). To date we have no evidence of direct use of force by the military against demonstrators. The government has gone out of its way to avoid confrontational situations; it is fearful of what the military will do if push comes to shove. And even if soldiers do prove reliable, Jaruzelski is concerned about the public image and the impact public opinion will have on the military. (2) Polish military training programs have been significantly disrupted. With senior officers (as well as middle-level officers and senior NCOs) out administering the country, there is nobody home to mind the store. This does not mean that no training is going on, but the combat readiness of the Polish military has declined. (3) There is resentment on the part of many military men--particularly enlisted men and lower-ranking officers--over the position in which they find themselves. There is conflict between ZOMO and the military, as indicated by incidents on buses and mutual verbal abuse. There is bitterness directed against the Party for making a mess of things and leaving the military to clean up. (4) The lack of economic resources means that there will almost certainly be a further deterioration in the quality of Polish military equipment. (5) While public support for the military has not collapsed, there are signs that it is becoming a problem. It is becoming more difficult to recruit officer candidates. The military is now willing to accept people it would not have accepted in the past. One can only point to the Czechoslovak experience in 1968: The Czechoslovak military has yet to achieve its pre-1968 recruiting standards. (6) It may be difficult to get the generals to go back to their barracks. There is no sign that they want to go back. There is serious disdain for the Party, its nepotism, incompetence, corruption. One suspects that the generals are beginning to enjoy what they are doing. In terms of its domestic role, the military will be around for a long time. Political alienation continues. As long as Jaruzelski is able to maintain control by the use of ZOMO, he can keep the lid on. If the situation deteriorates to the point where the military has to be used against crowds, the game will be lost and Soviet invasion will result.
- The ZOMO issue is worth pursuing. The writings about Poland in the 1970s made very little mention of ZOMO. When the internal role of the military was discussed, it was usually assumed that regular forces would be used against the people. Was that because we forgot about the security forces, or because in the 1960s and 1970s security forces were not what they were in Stalinist times? There was an analytical gap. Perhaps there

was a conscious policy, as a result of the 1970 Gdansk riots, to rebuild the Polish internal security forces, especially ZOMO, for just the kind of eventuality that occurred. In Western countries we do not assume that military regulars will be used for crowd control, yet this was the thrust of the writings about Eastern Europe.

- The issue of internal security forces in Communist countries did not start with ZOMO. There is a long tradition. These troops were envisaged as more likely than the regular army to respond to the Party in crisis situations. In the Soviet Union, MVD troops are a major component of the Soviet armed forces. They receive specialized training, e.g., in riot control, and they are outfitted with specialized equipment. Particular political considerations go into recruitment and stationing of the MVD, which includes a great number of non-Slavs, especially Central Asians. This is explained by the political control function of the MVD, the presumption being that in case of unrest in a Slavic area, the Soviet leadership can rely much more on Central Asians to put it down than on Russians. This was the case in the Novocherkask riots and the Kaunas riots.
- Internal security forces are nothing new in Eastern Europe. After the Communist takeover, troops loyal to the Party were organized in every East European country. The regular army was not called upon for domestic repression, for understandable reasons. During the process of de-Stalinization, the role of the internal security forces appears to have diminished somewhat. In Czechoslovakia during the Dubcek period, the Lidova Milice strongly opposed the Dubcek reforms. Immediately after 1968, there was a conscious effort by the Party to recruit into the Lidova Milice, and Party loyalty was a key factor.
- What is ZOMO? Was it always an institution to be used with its present capabilities, or was it consciously built up after 1970 as a result of the Gdansk unrest?
- ZOMO has been in existence since 1945. Following the 1956 Poznan incidents, the organization was greatly enlarged. At present, ZOMO is jokingly referred to by workers as "the beating heart of the Party." Generally speaking, ZOMO includes two types of soldiers: (1) prisoners offered the option of joining ZOMO instead of serving a sentence for criminal (not political) offenses; (2) soldiers who have completed two years of military service, mainly men from the countryside with poor prospects in civilian life, poorly educated, and of generally low moral and political levels. They view ZOMO as a life

career. They are assigned apartments (for which other young people wait 15 to 20 years) and their pay is better than average. Physical strength is a basic requirement. The former head of ZOMO was a former Wehrmacht soldier who was taken prisoner by the Russians or defected to the Russian side in 1943. He was trained by the NKVD; he completed the Higher Infantry School in Rembertow in 1949 and headed ZOMO after that. Today ZOMO is one of the best equipped police forces in the world. Its officers are mainly graduates of the Militia Officer School in Szczytno or the Higher Military Officer School in Legionowo. They're not from criminal backgrounds. Most of them have had two years of regular army service, during which they were under close scrutiny by political officers. There is a selection process at the conscript level, following which the conscripts are channeled into the militia, the security forces, or the regular armed forces. Those selected for the Militia Officers School are judged by the Party to be the most reliable.

- We should also consider the Polish People's Army itself, its relationship with Party organizations and its economic function, the role of its commissars in large enterprises. After martial law, Jaruzelski said that the military takeover was temporary and the program of renewal of the Party would proceed. There were some pointed statements from the MPA that only the military could rebuild the Party, and indeed, very little seems to have been accomplished in terms of rebuilding civilian Party organizations at the *wojewodztwo* (regional), *powiat* (local), and especially enterprise levels.
- Military rule in Poland is "temporary" in the same sense that Socialism is a temporary stage in the Soviet Union's transition to Communism. If there is Party rebuilding going on, it is one of the best kept secrets in Poland. The Party was so totally corrupted, so totally in disrepute that it has suffered a devastating loss. The military will be around for a long time, and the Soviets are not very happy about it.
- The Polish officer corps, like its counterparts in other East European countries, is very different from officer corps in the West. When a Western officer leaves the army, he finds other employment. In the Soviet and East European armies, the situation is very different. When an officer leaves he loses everything: a good salary, his apartment, his family's jobs, university placements. In the past 40 years, over 50,000 officers have been expelled from the Polish army, mainly for political disloyalty. Army officers now feel they are part of a new class in Poland. The Solidarity movement was a great threat to them. If Solidarity had achieved its goals, many of them would have had to leave the service, since Poland does not

need such a big army, especially under the present terrible economic conditions. Most officers are very close to the regime and the Party. Their relationship to the Party is illustrated by the saying, "Catholics believe in and practice their faith; officers do not believe in but practice Party tenets."

- Extrapolating from comments in *Zolnierz Wolnosci* discussions and more explicit uncensored first-hand reports, we have indications of a certain amount of disgruntlement and discontent, at least at the lower levels of the officer corps, at the role the military has had to play. This discontent is both professional (reflecting the feeling that combat capability cannot be maintained if officers spend their time inspecting and running voivodships) and political (because the army's new role is unpopular, social resentment is focused against the army). The disruption of the military seems undeniable--e.g., Gen. Mroz, head of the Chief Military Inspectorate, and 25 other officers spent almost three weeks carrying out an inspection in Olsztyn in 1982; he could not therefore have been paying much attention to what was going on in the army itself. The case of Gen. Mroz is but one example of the disruption of the military function which has given rise to dissatisfaction among the professional officers.
- Does this situation lead to tension between the military as one institution and the Party as a separate institution? Or is it a source of tension *within* the Party, since all high-ranking officers are members of the Party, Jaruzelski having been one of the more brutal Party representatives during the suppression of anti-Communist opposition in the late 1940s?
- The vast majority of military officers are Party members and their lives are tied up with the Party. But military officers seem to feel bitterness toward the Party for having made a mess of things.
- We should differentiate between two kinds of Polish military, conscripts and the officer corps. And within the Polish officer corps, we should differentiate between the combat and the non-combat units. Overall, only 25 to 30 percent of Polish officers serve in combat units; the remaining 70 to 75 percent serve in military administration, military training schools, etc. Among the 70 percent in non-combat units, the majors, lieutenant colonels, and colonels far outnumber the lieutenants and captains. Senior officers now have the opportunity to become military commissars, governors of provinces, directors of enterprises, etc. There is hatred between the military commissars and the former Party apparatchiks. Many of the

apparatchiks have been expelled from the Party for corruption. The majors and colonels are not necessarily more honest. They simply didn't have the opportunity for corruption in the past, and now that they have the opportunity, they are under very close scrutiny. For example, *Polityka* ran a very critical report of a military inspection in the Torun voivodship. The army has ousted the Party from a number of positions, the most significant example being Jaruzelski's nomination of General Dziekan to the Head of the Party Central Committee Cadre Department--Jaruzelski's first Party nomination upon becoming First Secretary. With the backing of Jaruzelski and the Military Council for National Salvation (WRON), Dziekan has ousted most of the old Party apparatchiks, perhaps as many as 85 percent of the pre-Jaruzelski officials.

- The Polish military assumed political leadership with the formation of the Military Council of National Salvation and the nomination of Gen. Jaruzelski as First Secretary of the Party. An informal grouping of mostly military officers, with some civilian Party figures, constitutes the effective political leadership of the country. The military exerts strong influence on what is left of the Party apparatus at all levels. There has been no transfer of authority back from the military to the Party apparatus.
- Are the military really doing what the Party is supposed to be doing? The military are involved in government and economic administrative decisions. They are trying to help the local provincial governors, the local plants, and the economic systems to work. Since Jaruzelski assumed the prime ministership, there has been a widening gap between Party affairs and government affairs. The military are now helping the government, but they are leaving the Party out.
- When the Party is functioning correctly, the way it was intended to function in a Communist society, it works day to day as a coordinator, director, policymaker, and implementer at all levels. So the military in Poland today are exercising a traditional Party role. We are questioning whether the Polish Party can reenter that arena, not only because it has failed to rebuild itself, but because the military may come to enjoy this new role.
- In the past, when local government bodies proved powerless, the Party brought in the local Party secretary to head the local government. It is now the military who are coming in, in that sense.

- Is the Party supposed to lead the provincial government by the nose or is it merely supposed to guide, lead, exhort, and propagate ideas but stay out of the execution and administration of policies? During the Gierek period, the tendency was for the Party to get into government in a very strong way. The reaction after 1980 was to get the Party out of government and administration, including economic administration. Now the Party has in effect collapsed, and government officials at the local and national levels are unsure about how much power they have, which results in much delayed action. The military have filled that gap, and they continue to push the government at various levels into doing the things it ought to be doing. In that sense, the military are filling the role the Party used to fill, but they are not playing a role in the ideological renewal of the Party, nor are they taking its place in mapping out the Party program. The situation varies from province to province, depending on how effective the Party organization and local government systems are.
- The Polish officer corps has only one alternative--to continue what it has started. It must keep tightening the screw. It no longer has the confidence of Polish society, and the only thing that remains is for it to break Solidarity, to break the opposition. In the future, if the economic situation improves, the officer corps might undertake some steps to liberalize the functioning of the government machine.
- If we imagine a Soviet military invasion and occupation, what position would Jaruzelski and the Polish officer corps take?
- Jaruzelski and the Polish officers are more afraid of a Soviet invasion than they are of Solidarity. If the Soviets invade, Jaruzelski and his officers have no alternative but to support them, to be Quislings. Now they are Quislings in fact but not in name, so they will do everything to prevent a Soviet invasion.
- But what if it should come to Soviet invasion?
- The Polish military will side with the Soviets. They have burned their bridges. They are the murderers of the miners at the Wujek mine and of dozens of other Polish workers; they have jailed thousands of Poles; they have no way to turn back. They are trying to establish order with their own hands, but if they fail, it is they who will ask the Soviets to come in, although this is the last thing they want.

- There is a strange human contradiction in the fact that the military who imposed martial law and thus ended the experiment of peaceful evolutionary democratization are not blamed for the sense of betrayal and frustration their actions evoked.
- Why isn't more hostility shown toward the army, especially in light of the half-despairing accounts in *Zolnierz Wolnosci* of commissars who are finding themselves under the gun when they cannot solve problems any better than their predecessors from the Party apparatus?
- It is a paradox: In Poland, society is at war with the regime. Yet the hatred is directed not against Jaruzelski, not against the military, but against the system, Socialism, Communism, the Party, the past leadership. Jaruzelski is still viewed as the only person, and the military as the only institution that might possibly improve economic performance and perhaps eventually start a dialogue. Time may be running out; the country is rapidly becoming a Third World country in economic terms, and popular perceptions will change.
- The Polish people want to believe the military are not corrupt. The military represent the nation, as opposed to ZOMO, which represents the state. The military have thus far not been used to crack heads.
- Looking at the Polish regime today, there are essentially four components: (1) the military, (2) the security forces, (3) the Party, (4) the government administration. Of these four, the military are viewed as the most liberal. A case in point is the military courts: People arrested for taking part in demonstrations would much rather be tried by a military court than a civilian one. The military judges feel more secure and are not afraid to make decisions freeing people, whereas the civilian judges are scared. In the provinces, the military commissars tend to overrule the Party or civilian officials.<sup>1</sup>
- The Party is in no shape to make a comeback. Solidarity is also out of the picture. That leaves Jaruzelski and the military in total control. The military seem to have no specific long-term program, perhaps due in part to the fact that Jaruzelski does not have a complicated worldview. The

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<sup>1</sup> Another participant cited contrary evidence. Of 87 Solidarity activists sentenced by courts, the average sentence given by civil courts was 2.6 years in prison, while the military courts' average was 3.2 years (*Kontakt*, Paris, No. 8, December 1982, pp. 35-36).

military are dealing with pragmatic short-term problems in various areas, keeping the government and the economy going. But how long can this process go on?

- It has been argued that the relative weight of the MPA declined in the 1960s and 1970s at the expense of increasing military autonomy and that for that reason and because Jaruzelski was pushing military professionalism the army was relatively unprepared to take on its new, domestic role. But there is a strong case that the armed forces can do a better job for the Party than the Party itself can. The army, or at least elements of the army, were extremely well prepared to implement martial law, which was meticulously planned.
- The issue is not martial law, which obviously was well prepared. The issue is the difference between professional military and professional politicians. The traits that any Polish leadership will require to deal with the issues facing Poland today are totally absent from this military caste. The military was free of corruption, but such traits as willingness to negotiate, to accept social pluralism are lacking. Their attitude is indicated by their approach to the economy. As reported in *Wojsko Ludowe*, commissars in the Lodz area blamed the economic problems in their enterprises on lack of "command discipline," i.e., if people do what they are told, Poland will shape up. That outlook explains why the military did not take any steps to renew dialogue with society.
- Dirigisme is a Communist trait as well as a military trait.
- Both tactical and circumstantial factors are involved. Clearly, plans for martial law were prepared as early as November 1980. But the military increasingly found themselves being pulled in to fill voids opening up around them, in the mines, in industrial enterprises, and so on. Somebody had to mind the shop and there was nobody else around.
- It's not working well. The civilians may be hopeless at running the country, but the military are not very good.
- What is important to the generals is that control be maintained. The military feel that as long as they maintain control, other things will take care of themselves.

- While the military might be prepared to do all this for a limited period of time, they do not look forward to doing this for very long, because many high-ranking officers must now do two jobs. There is a growing feeling of unhappiness, frustration, overwork. It is not a permanent situation, and this is something Jaruzelski has to worry about.
- Another view, already expressed, is that the military are enjoying power and that it is going to be very hard to get them "back on the farm." They may not like the extra work but they like the extra glory. There is also a belief that this is not such a bad thing for the Polish army because it resulted in a lot of high-level deadwood being moved out to the regions, making room for younger officers.
- If the military are going to carry out this domestic political role for quite a while, what effect will this have on the military institution? We could learn something by looking at what has happened to professional militaries that have assumed political leadership roles in other countries for an extended period. In Poland, whatever the long-term viability of the military institution as a governing body, the impact on the effectiveness and professionalism of the military as a fighting force is negative. The MPA is more on the scene than it was in the past. A new Central Committee directive of June 1982 emphasizes the role of the MPA. It reemphasizes the role of political officers. How can that be if the Party itself is in disarray, and if the MPA really has no effective boss except Jaruzelski?
- It is an overstatement to characterize this as opposition between the military and the Party and to imply that the rule of the Party is down in an absolute institutional sense. It is the triumph of a military faction within and over the remainder of the Party. The greater role of the MPA is perfectly explicable. It is another tool by which the current Party leadership, which is precisely a military leadership, exercises yet one more level of control over so many redundant ones, on the Soviet pattern.
- The conventional wisdom has been that the MPA is a watchdog of the Party in the military. But it hasn't worked out that way in some cases, most notably in Czechoslovakia, where the MPA became the cutting edge of reform. It turned against the conservative Party elements, and then Prchlik and Pepich, the two chiefs of the MPA during Dubcek's regime, became prominent reformers. The "Party watchdog" does not always act in the best interests of the Party. The military in Communist

societies need not necessarily be a force against reform. At some point, the military in a Communist society could become the source of regeneration of that system (this has occurred in the past in so-called modernizing countries).

- The military could be (1) a better ordered bureaucracy, a little less corrupt, a bit more efficient than other bureaucracies, particularly when you have a crisis of the social order as exists in Poland, and (2) an organ that could conceivably introduce new ideas, and some correctives to the inefficiencies of Communism. We have seen the first aspect but not the second in Poland. If one compares Poland with developing Third World societies (it may be a comparison that should be looked at harder as time goes on), there are many societies in which the military has played a modernizing and liberalizing role. There is no particular reason why this could not happen in a Marxist-Leninist type of society.
- How much does the responsibility for ruling Poland under martial law undermine the combat capability of the Polish army? If the Polish officer corps is "middle heavy" with majors and colonels who before December 13, 1981, were not really doing anything critical to combat operations and who now serve as commissars in local administration and enterprises, perhaps the combat capability of the Polish army is not undermined as much as might be assumed.
- Ninety percent or more of the military commissars have been nominated, not from combat units but from military/technical academies such as the Dabrowski Military Academy in Warsaw, which alone provided 800 commissars. Such officers have an academic background and knowledge which suits them for roles in civil administration and industry. So the fact that hundreds, maybe thousands, of officers left the military/technical academies to serve in civilian posts does not weaken the combat readiness of the 15 Polish Army divisions, the Navy, and Air Force units. But since August 1980 the military training program in combat units has been implemented only at 50 percent maximum. This means that combat readiness is at a very low level. Since December 13, 1981, combat units have taken part in all kinds of domestic military operations. The military has been assigned three tasks: (1) assault, (2) blockade, and (3) logistical support. These tasks have been assigned from the standpoint of loyalty to the Party. The highly loyal internal defense forces under the subordination of the Defense Ministry, the WOW, numbering close to 100,000 today, were assigned assault tasks, together with ZOMO, the militia, and civilian security forces. The more neutral, main part of the Polish military (the 15 combat divisions) were assigned blockade tasks, where they were not directly involved in operations against striking

workers. The military element closest to Solidarity, the OTK, territorial defense forces, were assigned logistical support tasks, where they had no contact with strikers; most of these units are without weapons, especially heavy weapons. These various military units have not executed their military training program because of the other tasks assigned to them (except for the internal security forces, which have had excellent training). Operational army troops have a very low degree of combat capability at present.

- With the possible exception of Gdansk in the week of December 13, 1981, there is no evidence of a single incident of WOW forces being used in an assault capacity.
- Generally speaking, ZOMO, civilian security forces, and the police are used in the first echelon in assault tasks, WOW in the second echelon. This was especially true in the Wujek mine incident, where a full regiment of WOW was present, but only a very small part of it was directly involved in the clashes with the miners.
- It is important to note that, as their name indicates, the WOW are internal defense forces, not internal security forces. It is questionable that the WOW are as numerous as was suggested, nor do they have a mission in internal security necessarily separate from regular military forces.
- What was the impact on the Polish army of events between August 1980 and December 1981? Was the turbulence in society reflected in the army?
- Fifty-five percent of the Polish army are conscripts, who of course represent a cross section of Polish society. Many of them, inducted after the formation of Solidarity, had been active members of the union. Most of them are anti-Soviet and pro-Solidarity.
- The issue of the combat capabilities and reliability of the Polish forces in the Warsaw Pact during this whole period has to be approached from the national political dimension more than just the military institutional dimension.
- From the Warsaw Pact standpoint, this discussion suggests a serious problem of reliability. Poland has a conscript army, and there is real bitterness among the vast majority of the populace over the deterioration of the country under martial

law. There is further decline in combat readiness and equipment.

- The weight of the Polish military in the Warsaw Pact has decreased since August 1980. The Polish Front variant of a Warsaw Pact attack is not so simple. If war were to break out tomorrow, Poland would not be in a position to send all 15 divisions outside its borders. Poland must keep some divisions inside Poland to support ZOMO and militia forces. For months and maybe years, the creation of a Polish Front in wartime will not be possible, since it could include only 8 or 9 Polish divisions and would require 10 to 12 Soviet divisions.

#### JARUZELSKI

- Let us turn to the issue of the man who deserves much of the credit or blame for what has happened to the Polish army under martial law and before it, Wojciech Jaruzelski. There are many puzzles about this man, his very rapid early advancement, his particular career pattern, the role he played in Polish Communist politics in the 1970s and what has happened since. Perhaps we should distinguish the consequences of what Jaruzelski has done from his intentions and motives. It follows from our discussion that the military is likely to play its present role for a longer rather than a shorter period of time, and this presumably means that Jaruzelski himself will be the center of attention for some time to come.
- There are interesting gaps in Jaruzelski's biography which contribute to making him an enigma. He went to the Soviet Union from Nazi-occupied Poland and was apparently sent to Kazakhstan, yet for some reason, he did not join the so-called Anders army, which eventually evacuated to Iran. Considering his background, it would have been a logical thing for him to do. He would never have joined the Communist Berling Army. In the early postwar period, from 1945 to 1947, he fought the anti-Communist underground. He joined the Party in 1947. In accounts of events preceding October 1956, his name is not mentioned, yet he was one of the youngest generals in Polish history, and Rokossowski must have looked on him with considerable kindness. His name does not appear on the list of signatures of high-ranking officers in support of Gomulka. Jaruzelski stayed out of the byzantine politics within the Polish army in the 1960s. In 1968, he became defense minister. How did he feel about intervention in Czechoslovakia? His behavior in December 1970 raised questions, as did his behavior in June 1976. It is said that it was Jaruzelski who forced Gierek to rescind the food price increases in 1976, stating that Polish soldiers would not fire on Polish workers. Today, while there is tremendous popular hatred of the system, Jaruzelski himself has not become the target of that hatred.

People still view him as a modest individual who did not seek office, but finally agreed to take over from Kania in October 1981 because he wanted to prevent Olszowski from taking over. (There is apparently long-lasting personal dislike between the two.) Jaruzelski did not want to become prime minister in February 1981; he probably preferred to operate from behind the scenes. In each case, faced with the alternative of having someone else take over, he decided to accept the office. It is suggested that he really does see himself as the "savior of the country," the man who prevented civil war, who stepped in at the last minute, who knows better than the people what is good for Poland. His ideal is Marshal Pilsudski, who had very much the same attitude. Jaruzelski is viewed by Poles as a military man; he believes in discipline, centralization of decisionmaking, hierarchical routine, which would suggest that he is likely to retain military rule in Poland for an indefinite period of time. Even with the announced lifting of martial law, nothing much would change: the military would still remain in control, and it would still be in charge of key ministries and key regions. Jaruzelski distrusts the Party apparatus and government administration. Apparently, he envisaged a situation where he would issue a few orders, and everything would literally fall into place. It didn't happen. The economy is falling apart. But still, he apparently intends to persist, perhaps as the lesser evil, perhaps because he views his leadership as the only way the country might revive. And although he is a military man, he cultivates intellectuals. Unlike Gomulka or Gierek, he surrounds himself with scholars and experts. Perhaps he does have an open mind.

- An anomaly in his military career was his assumption of the leadership of the MPA in the early 1960s, after a series of strictly line positions, including command of the 12th Division. This sudden leap to a political post from which he then went on to be chief of the general staff and minister of defense is again something out of the ordinary from career tracks in the Warsaw Pact militaries.
- Jaruzelski is not a Polish de Gaulle or an individual like Marshal Pilsudski. He is simply one of the talented, educated Polish generals who under the circumstances was suited to take on the role he is now playing. If there were no Jaruzelski, then another Polish general like Tadeusz Tuczapski (no less talented) would have taken over. The only difference would be that the December 12-13, 1981, operations might have been less brilliantly executed; maybe not seven miners, but 70 or 170 would have been killed at the Wujek mine, but in other respects, the situation would have been the same. Jaruzelski is a product of his class, the ruling elite of Poland. The army was the one factor that in the concrete conditions of 1981 was able to act. Jaruzelski's personal role is very great, but it should not be exaggerated.

- Jaruzelski has learned from experience. As a member of the ruling elite under three successive leaders (Gomulka, Gierek, and Kania), he has learned from their mistakes. If everything were to depend on him he would not repeat the same mistakes. But everything does not depend on him. The question is asked, Why is a man from such a Polish, religious family, which had been persecuted by the Soviets, today one of the Soviets' best allies? It is a question of the times. Jaruzelski is completing his 40th year of military service and people like that do not change. August 1968 was a very important point in his career. As defense minister, he passed on Gomulka's order to invade Czechoslovakia, together with other Warsaw Pact armies. For Jaruzelski, this was a turning point. If he had refused Gomulka's order, he would today be one of the 100 generals expelled from the Polish army, like General Frey-Bielecki, the Air Force commander, who in 1956 did not agree that Poland had to be a satellite of the USSR.
- Jaruzelski is an intelligent, sensitive, reserved, hard-to-reach person, by no means an extrovert. He seems very controlled, well organized, coherent, careful in the way he presents things. He thinks that Poland should be run in a tight, disciplined way, the way you would expect a division to be run. He sees himself as the man who gives orders on how to run Poland, with the main emphasis on the maintenance of order, with very few ideas on how to run the country beyond that. He likes intellectuals and keeps an open mind in a sense. If new ideas conflict with the business of running the country, he always opts instinctively for the security side of a situation. Jaruzelski sees himself as the father of the country, the head of the only institution that can hold Poland together. His attitude toward the Soviets is complex. It is part of that strain of Polish political thought which sees the relationship with Russia as crucial, the old Dmowski strain. Jaruzelski sees himself as a realist. He does not see any other way for Poland than the Russian connection. This is probably the leitmotiv of his political thinking. But that leaves all sorts of ambivalence. What is certain is that he is in control of the armed forces.
- Jaruzelski is a private person; he does not make many appearances, and he does not run around the country making speeches.
- Jaruzelski is an extreme contrast to all the "old boys." He is not corrupt, and he is so radically different from people like Maciej Szczepanski that Poles really want to believe he is different.

- A leading reformist official once pointed out that of all the generals he had been acquainted with, Jaruzelski seemed to be a bona fide intellectual, receptive to reformist ideas.
- Jaruzelski really believes that the Soviets are on the way up, and apart from geopolitics and the necessity of maintaining close relations with the Soviets, he has apparently become convinced that the future does belong to the Soviets and that Poland might as well hitch its star to the USSR.
- There is a view that the Soviets are delighted that Jaruzelski bailed them out, that he made direct Soviet intervention unnecessary. So they are quite willing to give him a fair amount of room to maneuver. This became particularly clear in two cases, the Kocielek case and the Olszowski case. He can do things without necessarily seeking Soviet approval, or at least he can get approval for fairly drastic measures.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

### Polish Bonapartism

- Our discussion points to an army in control politically, ruling Poland, and likely to be doing so for some time to come. There are differences in views about the instrumentalities by which it is doing this, and about exactly what is happening with the civilian Party apparatus, but clearly the army is in command. The army has turned the tables on the Party. In any Bolshevik system the Party is supposed to control the gun. It is not that the Polish army holds the gun on the Party--rather, you have to look hard to find the Party at all. While there are reasons, both domestic and Soviet, for making efforts to push the army out of that position sooner rather than later, things are moving in the other direction. Personal rivals to Jaruzelski seem to be out of the picture. There is no sign of a revival of the civilian Party apparatus. While the military is not demonstrably improving things in the economy and administration, it seems to be an effective source of decisions.
- What is the alternative to the military? If Solidarity is decapitated, if the Church is unable and unwilling to run society, and if we fail to even find the Party, let alone coherent factions, then the military seems destined to stay in control until Poland collapses or until the Party can in a few years reassert some of its prerogatives.

- Other Communist Parties are defensive about the imposition of martial law. One discussion on Budapest television described the military takeover in Poland as temporary and therefore nothing to worry about. As time passes, one wonders where Poland's example is likely to strike resonance. Romania seems a logical candidate. A counterelite to Ceaucescu might be required by circumstances, and the military seems the most likely candidate.
- The case of China comes to mind. The internal party struggle between the Red Guards and the professional Party and government apparatus led to chaos, and the military moved in, not because it wanted to but because of the absolute necessity to restore order. The military remained in a prevalent position until 1972-1973 and has gradually been moved out over the last decade as another elite Party group reasserted itself.
- Turning to the Soviet case, circumstances do not presage any strong parallel in the succession struggle, i.e., an assertion of power by the Soviet military, unless the Soviets find themselves in a situation of economic catastrophe. We will see the Soviet military as a corporate group seeking to assert its autonomy over purely military affairs, as it was largely successful in doing under the Brezhnev leadership.
- Is Poland a model for other East European countries?
- Poland is not a model to be replicated elsewhere, because of the unique circumstances of the economy, of the Solidarity experience, and of the Church. The Polish case is also unique in view of its really desperate economic situation. Yet the economic situation throughout Eastern Europe is becoming disastrous.
- Eastern Europe has economic problems, and the peculiar thing about Poland is not its economic condition, but the absence of the Party. The Parties in other East European countries are in fairly good shape. In Poland there is no Party and there is an opposition in place in every factory. That is where the battle is going to be fought out. There is no way Jaruzelski can win that battle. Because of his essentially do-nothing-except-maintain-order approach, the opposition can wear down the government before the government can wear down the opposition. At that point there could be disorders on a large scale, and if the situation deteriorates further, there could be Soviet intervention.

- Poland is unique. But there is an opposition now because the Party has so badly mismanaged things. If that is the case, then the same thing could happen in other Communist societies. Could it be that the next stage or the ultimate stage in Communist development is militocracy, at least the initial stages of which we seem to be observing in Poland? In the long term, the problems in Poland today could happen in the Soviet Union. The Communist Parties in general do not seem capable of adapting. The role of the military as an alternative source of authority needs to be examined.
- We have a systemic crisis in Eastern Europe. There is no "new course" this time, as there was after Stalin's death, there is a little tinkering in some of the countries, but the Parties don't have any great ideas about what to do for the next act. That is what makes Poland so interesting. Whatever we call it, Bonapartism, junta economism, military Communism, it didn't happen through the military coming in with a plan for what to do with Polish society. They are now in the process of defining that ad hoc. The coming months or years will show whether the military stagnates or whether it does turn out to be a new variation which offers some hope of reform. If it goes in the latter direction, the question is whether it will have an anti-Soviet, anti-Russian dimension. It is not the Soviet Union that the Poles will be looking to for inspiration. There is an effort on the part of some Poles to look back to the 1945-1948 period, the Polish road to Socialism as an underpinning of what might come next.

#### **Reliability and Effectiveness of the Polish Armed Forces**

- Would part of the Polish military prepare for resistance at a time of high danger of Soviet military intervention? The army is operating under difficult conditions. It is claimed that even small-arms ammunition was limited by the Soviets due to reliability considerations--because the Soviets do not want the Polish military to be in a position to be involved in case of Soviet intervention.
- The Soviets are not that deeply involved in controlling Polish forces at lower levels. Such matters are decided by Jaruzelski, the Polish general staff, and Polish commanders of military districts. The Soviets are involved with Polish military decisionmaking at Warsaw Pact Joint Command level, where they discuss strategy, but what goes on in Polish military units is determined by the Polish Defense Ministry. The Soviets cannot control supplies to individual units. They are not physically able to do that. Of course, they have their own agents inside the Polish army, who report what is going on.

- It has been asserted that at a certain point Jaruzelski would call in the Russians. Would the army as a whole go as far down that path as Jaruzelski and his generals are prepared to go? Would Jaruzelski call the Russians in before he used his army, or would he wait to see if the army fell apart?
- Jaruzelski will call in the Soviet army not 5 minutes before twelve but 5 minutes after twelve. It is difficult to say what the reaction of the Polish army would be, because much would depend on the situation in Poland, on how much blood had been spilled. Most of the Polish officer corps would be on the Soviet side, but the conscripts are an open question. It seems that most of them would not leave the barracks at all. They would take the same passive position the Hungarian army took in 1956 and the Czechoslovak army took in 1968. The military internal security troops, the WSW units, would support the Soviets, and the main body of Polish soldiers would probably not fight the Soviets. There may be exceptions, though; there may be some small units that would join Solidarity and fight the Soviets.
- What about divisions within the officer corps? Sometimes it is said that the lower officers would behave quite differently from the more senior officers.
- There would be differentiation within the officer corps, directly proportional to rank. The fewer the stars, the lower the adherence to the Communist regime, and vice versa. There would be differences and maybe clashes inside the army. Junior officers would be against supporting the Soviet army, and senior officers would give the order to support it, so there could be clashes. There are such precedents in Polish history.
- It is not appropriate to talk about the Polish officer corps as a homogeneous, well-integrated entity. There were many discussions in the Polish army in the course of 1981, when the danger of Soviet intervention was quite real. There were quite striking differences. The senior officers in their fifties who remember World War II preferred to avoid bloodshed, while the young cadre for whom memories of World War II are vague were nationalistic. It would be up to the commanders to make a decision to fight or not to fight the Soviets and the younger commanders would fight. It is questionable that most of the military would remain in their barracks.

- It is difficult to imagine that the Polish military establishment would be less affected than was the Czechoslovak military in 1968. The Czechs did not fight when they were ordered not to, but after the invasion, 11,000 officers and 30,000 non-commissioned officers were purged or left the service of their own volition. Fifty-nine percent of all officers under 30 left of their own volition.
- In what terms would a division commander think of the issues of political reliability and fighting effectiveness in the case of a Polish division pursuing a Soviet objective?
- The reliability of East European armies in pursuit of Soviet operations against NATO is affected by three factors: (1) the success or failure of Soviet operations; (2) long-term or short-term duration of operations; (3) the enemy against which the Polish or other East European armies would be expected to fight. If Polish divisions were to fight against the American 7th Army divisions, they would have little willingness to fight, and under the right conditions, they might actually turn to full-scale desertion. If the Polish army were to face a West German corps, on the other hand, the troops could perform well if the overall situation appeared good for the Soviets and if there were no revolution on the Polish home front at the same time. The disposition and allocation of troops is also an important factor in terms of reliability and effectiveness.
- Two other factors might affect the reliability and effectiveness of the Polish armed forces: (1) the manner in which war began, whether quickly or as a series of increasing crises; (2) who started the war, in the popular perception.
- How can factors affecting reliability and effectiveness-- including success, length of operation, nature of the opposition, how the war begins, who starts it--be prioritized?
- The way in which a war against NATO were to begin would, of course, affect the use of East European forces. But the first question to be considered is, Would it be a nuclear war, or would it be a conventional war? In case of nuclear war, it is impossible to make any estimation as to the mentality, fighting spirit, etc., of the Warsaw Pact forces. In case of conventional war, Warsaw Pact forces today have such a great

advantage over NATO forces that they could launch a surprise attack without mobilization, without giving warning to the West. In such a case, the Polish army would be in the rear, in Poland, and would not be in the first strategic echelon. The Soviet army would be supported by the Czechoslovak and East German armies and the Poles would fight well in a successful operation by the time they got to Central Europe. If war were to start after mobilization, many factors, including the situation inside Poland, the Pope's position toward the conflict, and the international situation, would affect the morale of the Polish army, each factor having a different influence. In general, if the Soviets were successful against NATO, they could count on the East European armies, including that of Poland.

#### The Future of Coalition Warfare in the Warsaw Pact

- The dilemma from the Soviet point of view is this: The Polish military must rule Poland because there is no other instrument to keep the country in the Communist and Soviet system, yet how can this be done without in effect subtracting the Polish military from the Warsaw Pact? If even in the early 1960s, Marshal Grechko had some reservations on operational grounds about coalition warfare strategy, the Soviet general staff and political leadership must have stronger reservations today about utilizing the Polish military in a key supporting role in Warsaw Pact strategy. The issue is important enough and the change in the potential Polish contribution is big enough that the Soviets may be fundamentally rethinking Warsaw Pact coalition warfare doctrine. That could mean substituting Soviet for East European forces--not as easy today as it might have been in the past. There may also be changes in strategy and in planning away from surprise attack involving East European divisions.
- We have to ask ourselves how the Soviet leadership views the Polish crisis in its military dimensions. The Soviets assess the world situation similarly to the United States with regard to the unlikelihood of a war starting in Europe in the foreseeable future. The problem with the Polish military is not viewed as especially urgent, and they do not feel compelled to change military plans. The Soviets are more involved on the Sino/Soviet border, where they have increased their forces dramatically. There have been plans to allocate forces from the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany and the Northern Group of Forces into the Polish Front to be integrated with support units.

- Since August 1980, according to figures provided by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, the Soviets have increased their ground forces in Europe by two divisions. These are second- and third-category divisions, but they are active divisions. So the Soviets have found a partial answer to the problem of the potential lack of Polish divisions, which Jaruzelski would have to retain in Poland to ensure the transit of about 50 Soviet divisions through Poland. For the immediate future, the Polish army, including the operational forces, are worth much more to the Soviet general staff as a factor of stability inside Poland than in support of an external front.
- It might be useful to think in terms of two extreme scenarios. If the Polish crisis is gradually resolved on the pattern of Czechoslovakia or Hungary, then the impact 5 or 10 years from now will be insignificant, and the same incremental changes we have seen in Soviet doctrine and strategy over the past several decades would continue. The Soviets have always known that there is a serious political reliability problem with NSWP forces, and they understand the circumstances under which they can best guarantee political reliability. If, on the other hand, we postulate continued crisis, the erosion of the Party, and an increased tendency toward Bonapartism, the major corrective the Soviets may make is earlier use of weapons of mass destruction, not necessarily nuclear, to compensate for the loss of some of the conventional superiority that they would otherwise have counted on.
- The Soviets really don't lose that much mass, and it is easily overcome. The fact that some number of Polish divisions might be withdrawn from combat operations could be easily compensated by the Soviets through the addition of combat units from the Western Military District or even further East. The most regrettable thing for the Soviet general staff would be the perception that they would have difficulty moving their Armies through Poland. The events in Poland to date should suggest to the Soviet general staff that they can rest relatively easy on that point, since they are not faced with a population and an army in concert and hostile. They are faced with a horrible economic and political situation, but nevertheless they see an army that remained in the barracks, led by an officer corps that is apparently quite loyal to the objectives of the Pact as a whole.
- While the Soviets may be able to factor in replacements, this requirement does change the warning situation. The replacements have to be brought forward to be on line. Another alternative would be to station more troops in peacetime either in western parts of Poland or in East Germany, but there are powerful political reasons against both of these options. One other alternative, assuming no increased reliance on weapons of mass destruction, would be to get the East Germans to do more.

- The East Germans are having trouble maintaining their present force levels, because demographic trends are not positive; for the size of their population, the East Germans are providing a very considerable contribution. The East Germans cannot put up another five or six divisions.
- The East German contribution might consist not simply of adding divisions, but also of providing coverage on certain sectors, certain objectives.
- Regardless, the central sector is weakened. It would be difficult for the Soviets to draw replacements from the Western military districts. Most of these divisions are not category-one divisions, and the economic cost involved is prohibitive. Given the Soviet manpower shortage, how can the Soviets lift ten divisions from the Western District and bring them in? The other alternative, to take them from the Chinese Front and bring them to Europe, is not feasible. The major function of Soviet forces is one of political intimidation. In view of this, the Polish situation is important, not because it makes any difference militarily, but because it does make a difference psychologically. It is not as easy for the Soviets to solve this problem as has been suggested.
- The Soviets were concerned about Polish capabilities in operations across the so-called North German Plain, and perhaps they are already trying to make some accommodation in that regard. There is no particular problem of moving replacements across the Western military districts. We might expect in the next year or two to see Soviet/Warsaw Pact emphasis on the things that must be done to move troops across Poland.
- The Soviets have a formidable dilemma which has no easy solution. Neither the use of East German forces nor moving forces from the Far East are alternatives. If the situation in Poland deteriorates sufficiently for the Soviets to mount an invasion, that would solve their operational planning problem, for they would have the forces in Poland to take over the Northern Front mission. They wouldn't have to worry about reliability or about extra warning time. While regrettable from many standpoints, from a strictly military point of view, it would be good for the Soviets.
- The reliability issue remains. Ensuring transit through Polish territory might get more difficult. All the loyal Polish forces will not be available in wartime for an external front. An internal front would also exist.

- A small internal front could probably be assigned to reliable Polish forces, and it would not necessarily require a greater drain on Soviet forces.
- That brings us to the judgment--where there clearly are differences among experts--as to the Polish army's likely response. There are some who firmly believe that a good part of the Polish army would, in the event of a Soviet invasion, be inclined to resistance and would be less likely to be reliable for internal purposes.
- There is another possible trend we might see throughout the Pact, namely, increased utilization of the reserves. Martial law has meant increased mobilization of reserve officers in Poland.
- The discussion points to a very important change in the way the Soviets think about and prepare for a European war. In the 1960s, there was an increasing East European contribution to Soviet capabilities for warfare in the European theater. In the 1970s, there was a stagnant, decreasing East European contribution. However Poland plays itself out, whatever the answers on the issues raised in this discussion, no one has argued for a continuation of the present level of Polish and East European military contribution. There is more at issue than just Poland. The economic situation elsewhere in Eastern Europe portends a reduction in the military burden and Warsaw Pact contribution. If this occurs, Soviet adaptation will be needed and may take some of the forms mentioned. Nobody has suggested that the Soviets cannot adapt--the issue is how, at what cost, at the price of what other objectives? Just how hard that adaptation is going to be for Moscow depends in part on the outcome in Poland. The Polish story is not over. Before we draw too many "lessons," let's see how it turns out.

### Appendix A

#### PARTICIPANTS IN THE CONFERENCE ON THE POLISH MILITARY

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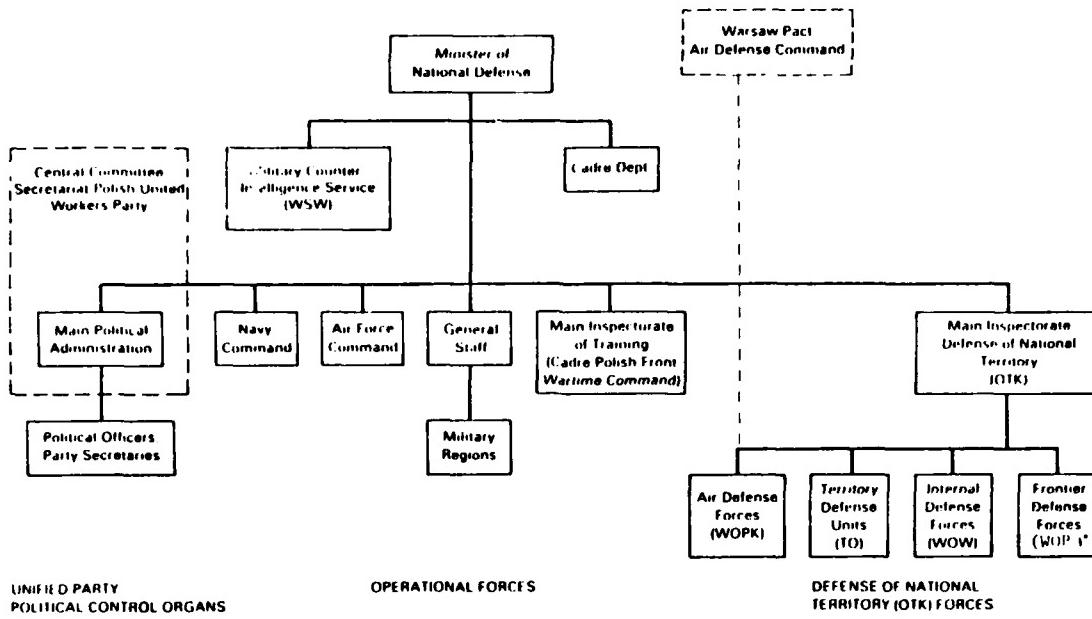
Mark Sullivan, Central Intelligence Agency

Robert Thrasher, Defense Intelligence Agency

Ted Warner, The Rand Corporation

**Appendix B**

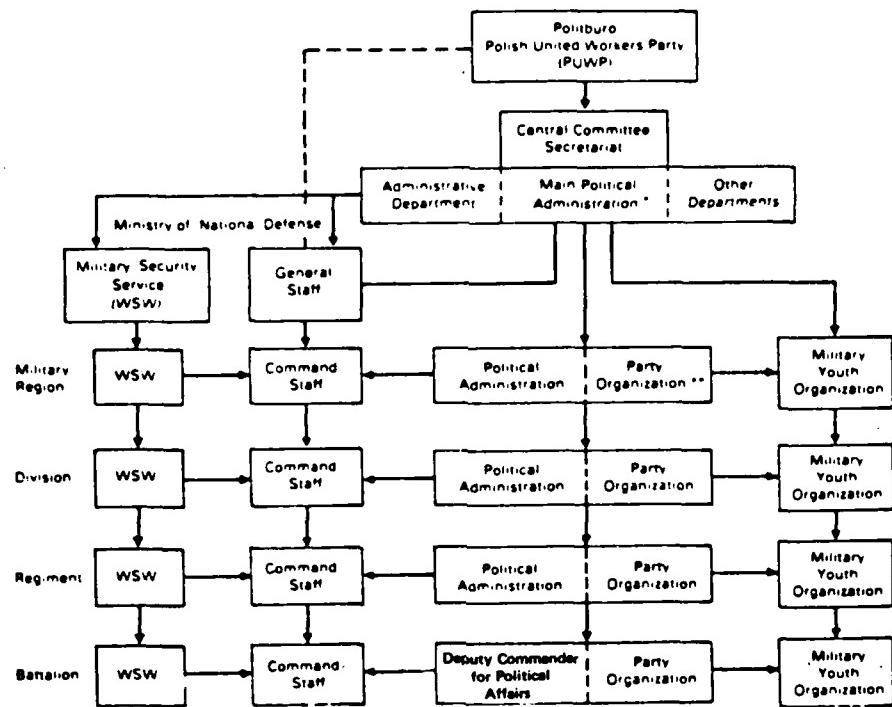
**ORGANIZATION OF THE POLISH ARMY  
AND INTERNAL SECURITY FORCES**



**Fig. 1 — Organization of the Polish armed forces (key components)**

SOURCE: *East European Military Establishments: The Warsaw Pact Northern Tier*,  
A. Ross Johnson, Robert W. Dean, Alexander Alexiev, Crane Russak, New York, 1980.

\*In peacetime subordinated to Interior Ministry

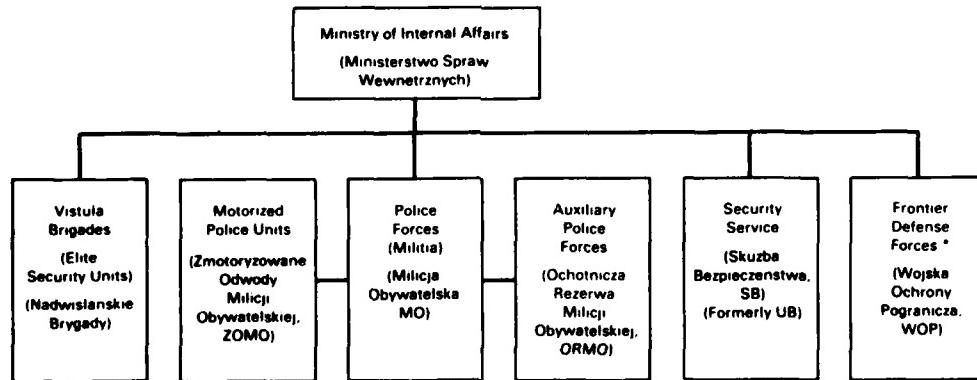


\*The MPA has dual status as a division of the Ministry of National Defense with the status of a Party Central Committee Department

\*\*United Party political Organs headed by the respective deputy commander for political questions

**Fig. 2 — The structure of political control in the Polish armed forces**

SOURCE: *East European Military Establishments: The Warsaw Pact Northern Tier*,  
A. Ross Johnson, Robert W. Dean, Alexander Alexiev, Crane Russak, New York, 1980.



**Fig. 3 — Organization of Polish internal security forces  
(key components)**

SOURCE: Compiled by A. Ross Johnson from Polish media references

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